

Statement of Beliefs of the Christian Faith

The Statement is a summary of the biblical position as held by the Apostles during the first century. It presents the Bible position in a clear, coherent form. It is comprised of seven chapters covering the Godhead, the Plan of Salvation, Doctrines Concerning Human Responsibility, Doctrine Concerning the Messiah, The Problem of Evil, The Church and The Kingdom of God. There is an introduction which deals with the question of the divergence between modern and ancient Christianity. There is also an Appendix which deals with the development of Trinitarian doctrines.

Christian Churches of God
PO Box 369, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA

Email: secretary@ccg.org

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Statement of Beliefs

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Introduction

For seventeen hundred years Christianity has been tied to a theological system, which has been based on Greek Philosophy and a system related to neo-Platonism. The Unitarian simplicity of the biblical message and the cohesiveness of God's revelation to man over both Testaments has been altered and obscured for the sake of power and domination of the then known world.

The end result was what was understood to be the structure as laid down in the councils of Nicaea (325AD), Laodicea (c. 366AD), Constantinople (381AD) and Chalcedon (451AD). The structure altered the understanding of God along metaphysical lines ultimately producing the Trinity. The Council of Laodicea (canon 29) also outlawed the Sabbath, under penalty, introducing accepted pagan festivals from Sunday worship (with the December Sun festivals later in 475 CE) and the Easter system in place of the Passover. What was also altered was the way the understanding of the biblical system and law was to be interpreted. The law given to Moses was held to be no longer relevant and the New Testament passages were re-interpreted to justify existing pagan practices.

For example, the food laws were held to be eliminated by misapplying Acts 10 and other texts. The effect on human health was immediate. However, the end result for the environment could only really be seen after some two thousand years. The breakdown in the food chain is contributed to, in a large degree, by the consumption of foods prohibited under biblical law.

The degradation of the land systems can only be seen fully after the lands have been exhausted by failure to observe the jubilee systems and the land Sabbaths because they are inextricably interlinked with the calendar based on the nineteen year moon cycles. The introduction of the solar calendar was itself a major step in destroying the understanding of the patterns and cycles God had established for natural harmony.

Modern Christianity by and large has very little if anything in common with original Christianity. The rise of Islam and the later wars with Islam were arguably the direct result of the false Christian system set up in Europe and West Asia by the Greek theological systems using the Cappadocian theology based on the Triune God and attempted mystical union with God and as God.

The Triune system simply does not work. The end result of seventeen hundred years of this erroneous doctrine has been the near destruction of the planet and the persecution of people genuinely trying to obey biblical laws.

The purpose of this work is to isolate in the clearest and simplest possible way the original message of the Bible and the New Testament Church under Jesus Christ and the apostles. No doubt some cherished fables will be challenged and demolished by what is stated herein. The work has been written so that it is as near as possible a series

of biblical statements or paraphrases, which have the supporting text quoted. In that way it is considered that the work is ultimately less ambiguous and the intent is clear. Where possible the complete range of texts on a subject is listed so as to avoid the all too prevalent practice of quoting in isolation or quoting misconstrued texts. Some biblical texts are plain forgeries (e.g. 1Jn. 5:7 KJV; 1Tim. 3:16 KJV from Codex A), or mistranslations (1Cor. 15:28 RSV etc; Rev. 3:14 NIV among numerous others), designed to negate contrary texts or misconstrue texts so as to appear to support the Triune or Cappadocian system when viewed in isolation.

When Messiah comes again he is going to introduce in total the system of law that he gave to Moses at Sinai. Every Christian has an obligation to identify and to implement the system of living and worship that is laid down in the Bible. The Christian is obligated to emulate the way of life of Jesus Christ and to live by the systems that Christ introduced and lived by as a man and pre-incarnate. This work is dedicated to producing the whole system in a coherent and identifiable manner so that the false systems of seventeen hundred years can be swept aside and the original and true way can be identified and implemented in the lives of all people no matter what they have done in the past. Our task is to call people to repentance and newness of life.

Chapter 1

The Godhead

1.1 God the Father

The Supreme Deity of the universe is God. He is the Almighty, the Creator and Sustainer of the heavens, the earth and all things therein (Gen. 1:1; Neh. 9:6; Ps. 124:8; Isa. 40:26,28; 44:24; Acts 14:15; 17:24-25; Rev. 14:7). He alone is immortal (1Tim. 6:16). He is our God and Father and the God and Father of Jesus Christ (Jn. 20:17). He is the Most High God (Gen. 14:18; Num. 24:16; Deut. 32:8; Mk. 5:7) and the One True God (Jn. 17:3; 1Jn. 5:20).

1.2 Jesus the Son of God

Jesus is the first begotten (*prototokos*) of the creation (Col. 1:15) hence the beginning (*arche*) of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14). He is the onlyborn (*monogene*) Son of God (Mat. 3:17; Jn. 1:18; 1Jn. 4:9), conceived of the Holy Spirit and born to the virgin, Mariam (Lk. 1:26-35). He is the Christ or Messiah (Mat. 16:16; Jn. 1:41), sent from God to be our Saviour and Redeemer (Mat. 14:33; Jn. 8:42; Eph. 1:7; Tit. 2:14). He is called the Son of the Most High God (Mk. 5:7). He was designated Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness by his resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4). He is given the throne of David to rule over the House of Jacob forever and of his Kingdom there shall be no end (Lk. 1:32).

1.3 The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4) is that essence or power of God which Christ promised to send to the elect (Jn. 16:7). It is not a person but the extension of the living power of God. It is the means whereby we become partakers of the Divine Nature (2Pet. 1:4), being filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17; Eph. 5:18) and hence **all** Sons of God (Job 38:7; Rom. 8:14; 1Jn. 3:1-2) and co-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:29; Tit. 3:7; Heb. 1:14, 6:17, 11:9; Jas. 2:5; 1Pet. 3:7). It is given by God to those who ask (Lk. 11:9-13) and obey him, dwelling in those who keep God's commandments (1Jn. 3:24; Acts 5:32). The Holy Spirit is the comforter that leads God's servants into all truth (Jn. 14:16,17,26). The Holy Spirit confers the power to witness (Acts 1:8). It administers gifts as recorded in 1Corinthians 12:7-11 and has fruits as described in Galatians 5:22-23 not being given by measure (Jn. 3:34 RSV; Rom. 12:6). It is the means by which God can finally become all, in all (1Cor. 15:28; Eph. 4:6).

1.4 The Relationship of the Holy Spirit to Christ and Humanity

The Holy Spirit operates from before baptism. The Spirit draws the individual to God through Christ (Heb. 7:25).

The firstfruits of the Spirit are given to the individual at baptism, from Romans 8:23, which clearly states that the **adoption** does not occur until the *redemption of the body*.

Thus we are *born again* but continue to grow in the Spirit daily in Christ Jesus until we come into the glory of God. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth (1Jn. 4:6, 5:6) and by speaking the Truth in all things we grow into Christ our head in all respects (Eph. 4:15). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God (Rom. 8:14) and the Spirit of **faith** (2Cor. 4:13) which searches all things and knows all things (1Cor. 2:10-11, 12:3 ff).

Thus the Holy Spirit is not an independent aspect of a triune God but is the means by which we become **elohim** (Zech. 12:8). The Spirit conveys to God an understanding of our thoughts and very being. Being routed through Jesus Christ as our mediator and intermediary elohim or theos (Ps. 45:6-7; Zech. 12:8; Heb. 1:8-9) it enables Christ to help, teach and comfort us and to enable us to exercise the power of God. The Spirit gives to each person the attributes God desires in order to benefit the body as outlined in 1Corinthians 12:7-11.

The Spirit can be quenched (1Thes. 5:19) by being neglected or grieved (Eph. 4:30) and thus admits of gains and losses in the individual.

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is love from Galatians 5:22. Therefore, if we do not love each other the Holy Spirit is not evident.

The Spirit is the means by which we worship God as stated in Philippians 3:3. Thus, it cannot be God as an object of worship and, hence, equal to God the Father. It is a force which empowers Christ. Christ is thus an *Everlasting Father* (Isa. 9:6) of which there are **many fatherhoods** in heaven and on earth (Eph. 3:15). Christ becomes *Everlasting Father* by delegation.

All of these fatherhoods or families are **named** for God the Father which is the reason we bow before God the Father, worshipping Him (Eph. 3:14-15).

Christ was the firstborn or firstbegotten of the creation. For him all things were created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities, all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things and in him all things hold together (Col. 1:16-17). But it was God who generated him and who willed that the creation exist and subsist in Christ. Therefore, Christ is not God in any sense that God the Father is God and who alone is immortal (1Tim. 6:16) existing in abiding perpetuity.

Christians are called out of this world to a life of service and dedication. Many are called but few are chosen (Mat. 20:16, 22:14). Christians are the chosen, as Christ was the chosen of God (Lk. 23:35). The elect were chosen by Christ (Jn. 6:70, 15:16,19), under direction of God (1Pet. 2:4).

To assist the Church, the elect who are the Church, or ecclesia, are given understanding of the mysteries of God. The Holy Spirit was the mechanism by which they were given to understand the mysteries of God and the Kingdom of God (Mk. 4:11). For the wisdom of God is spoken in a mystery (1Cor. 2:7), which is explained by the servants of God (1Cor. 2:7, 15:51). For God's will is explained as a mystery (Eph. 1:9) which God gave to His servants by revelation. Further the mystery is in the stewardship of Christ through the elect. Paul wrote

...assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. When you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; that is, how the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel (Eph. 3:2-6).

1.5 The Relationship of Christ, Satan and the Host to God

There are multiple entities referred to in the Bible as Elohim or Theoi, meaning gods. Christ was one of those subordinate entities referred to in the Old Testament as Elohim (see Zech. 12:8). Christ is referred to in the New Testament as being the new Morning Star at his return to earth. He will share this rank with his elect (Rev. 2:28, 22:16).

God is held by the Bible to be the God and Father of Christ (from Rom. 15:6; 2Cor. 1:3, 11:31; Eph. 1:3,17; Col. 1:3; Heb. 1:1 ff; 1Pet. 1:3; 2Jn. 3; Rev. 1:1,6, 15:3). Christ derives his life, power and authority by command of God the Father (Jn. 10:17-18).

Christ subordinates his will to that of God, who is the Father (Mat. 21:31, 26:39; Mk. 14:36; Jn. 3:16, 4:34). God gave the elect to Christ and God is greater than Christ (Jn. 14:28) and greater than all (Jn. 10:29). Thus God sent his **only born** (*monogenes*) Son into the world that we might live through him (1Jn. 4:9). It is God who honours or glorifies Christ (Jn. 8:54), God being greater than Christ (Jn. 14:28).

God is the Rock (*sur*) as a Quarry or Mountain from which all others are quarried, the flint of Joshua 5:2 which circumcises Israel, the principal and effective cause (Deut. 32:4). God is the Rock of Israel, the Rock of their salvation (Deut. 32:15), the Rock that bore them (Deut. 32:18,28-31). 1Samuel 2:2 shows that Our God is our Rock, an everlasting Rock (Isa. 26:4). It is from this Rock that all others are hewn, as are all the descendants of Abraham in the faith (Isa. 51:1-2). The Messiah is hewn from this Rock (Dan. 2:34,45) to subjugate the world empires. **God** is the Rock or base upon which the foundation is laid and upon which Christ will build his Church (Mat. 16:18) and upon which he himself rests. Messiah is the *Chief Cornerstone* of the Temple of God, of which the elect are the *Naos* or the Holy of Holies, the repository of the Holy Spirit. The Temple stones are all cut from the Rock that is God, as was Christ, and given to Christ, the spiritual rock (1Cor. 10:4), the rock of offence and stone of stumbling (Rom. 9:33) to form the Temple.

Christ is constructing the Temple so that God may be all, in all (Eph. 4:6). God has given Christ to be all and in all (*panta kai en pasin* Col. 3:11) putting all things under his feet (1Cor. 15:27) giving him to be the head over all things to the Church which is his Body, the fullness of him that fills all in all (Eph. 1:22-23). When God put all things under Christ, it is manifest that God is excepted, being the One who put things under the feet of Christ (1Cor. 15:27).

When Christ subdues all things then shall Christ himself be subject to God who put all things under Christ that God may be all in all (*panta en pasin* 1Cor. 15:28 not as per RSV). Thus the Platonist doctrines that seek to merge God and Christ in the Trinity contradict Scripture. Christ will sit on the right hand of God, by direction of God (Heb 1:3,13, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2; 1Pet. 3:22) and share God's throne as the elect will share the throne given to Christ (Rev. 3:21) which is *a throne of God* (Ps. 45:6-7; Heb. 1:8) or *God is thy Throne* translated *Your throne O God* (see footnote to annotated RSV).

God, who sends, is greater than he who is sent (Jn. 13:16), the servant not being greater than his Lord (Jn. 15:20).

Christ was challenged in the desert by Satan, and in effect the trial of Satan commenced. Satan, who was the *Morning Star, The Lucifer or Light Bringer* of this planet (Isa. 14:12) as its guardian and teacher, was in effect one of the Elohim who was subordinate to God the Father.

Christ was to be the Star that should come out of Jacob (in Num. 24:17). Thus it was signified in the Books of Moses that one of the Morning Stars that are mentioned as being present at the completion of this planet (in Job 38:7), one of the elohim, was to become a human being of Jacob and from David (Rev. 22:16).

This elohim we know as Jesus Christ was not yet the Morning Star of this planet. That rank was held by Satan (from Isa. 14:12 and Ezek. 28:2-10).

Christ had been anointed as the elohim of Israel from Psalm 45:7 and anointed above his companions or partners. However, Christ was not in fact in the position of Morning Star and will not assume those duties until his second coming. The rank and duties are to be shared with Christ by the elect, who share his nature as Morning Star in their hearts (translated *Day Star* in 2Pet. 1:19). The elect are promised to share in this power from Revelation 2:28.

Satan, as Morning Star, had challenged God Most High or God the Father as we are told in Isaiah 14:12. He tried to ascend or exalt his throne, a throne of God, above the Stars of God or the Council of Elohim. This Council is the Congregation of the Elohim or Gods referred to in Psalm 82:1. It is of interest to note that Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, disciple of John, held that Psalm 82:1 referred to the *Theoi* or *gods* which included also the elect, namely *those of the adoption* (*Against Heresies*, Bk. 3, Ch. 6, *ANF*, Vol. 1, p. 419).

There are multiple Sons of God (from Job 1:6, 2:1, 38:7; Ps. 86:8-10, 95:3, 96:4, 135:5) who are identified as the **Bene Elyon** or *Sons of the Most High*. The human elect are also included with the heavenly Host as *Sons of God* (from Rom. 8:14). Thus, Christ and the elect as Sons of God are one with God through the Holy Spirit, predestined from the **foundation of the world**. Christ laid down his power to become a man. He and all the elect receive the Sonship in power according to the Spirit of holiness by the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4).

From Acts 7:35-39 it was an angel that spoke to Moses on Sinai and this angel was Christ. In Galatians 4:14 Paul likens himself to an angel of God even Christ Jesus.

Also we will become like angels (Mat. 22:30) as an order or *isaggelos* (from Lk. 20:36), being co-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:29; Tit. 3:7; Heb. 1:14, 6:17, 11:9; Jas 2:5; 1Pet 3:7). The Old Testament identifies the Angel of YHWH as both Yahovah and Elohim (Ex. 3:2,4-6) where the God or elohim here was an angel; cf. Zech. 12:8).

Psalm 89:6-8 shows that there is a Council of Holy Ones (*qedosim* or *qadoshim*, also used of humans) comprised of both an inner and outer council. This is understood to be a celestial Council of the Elohim of Justice.

1.5.1 Christ as the Son of God

Satan attempted to tempt Christ in a number of ways. Firstly Satan referred to Christ as the Son of God (in Mat. 4:3, 4:6; Lk. 4:3). The demons also referred to Christ as the Son of God (in Mat. 8:29; Lk. 4:41; Mk. 3:11). Satan tried to have Christ prove his position as Son of God by a display of power, in that God had promised that He would give His angels charge of him (in Ps. 91:11-12). Satan omitted *to keep thee in all thy ways* and added *at any time*. Thus, by garbling Scripture, Satan attempted to take Christ's life.

Christ did not at any time correct Satan or the demons by asserting that he was God instead of the Son of God. Indeed, no demon attempted to assert the deception that Christ was Supreme God until after his death in order to establish a doctrine that said that Christ was God in the same way that God the Father was God and thus achieve, after his death, a deception that Christ would have refuted in life. In each of the temptations the aim was to undermine the obedience of Christ to God and to, in effect, break Scripture. Satan attempted to have Christ worship him. He promised Christ the rulership of the planet **then** if Christ would worship him.

Christ did not challenge his right to transfer his rulership of the planet or indeed that he was ruler. Christ instead replied

...it is written: You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.

Christ did not tell Satan that Satan should worship Christ but rather referred him to the law. Christ never at any stage of his ministry claimed to be God. He said he was the Son of God. It was for this reason that he was placed on trial.

As stated in Matthew 27:43

He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if He wants him, for he said, 'I am the Son of God'.

It was here that Christ cried out to fulfil the scripture in Psalm 22:1.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Christ clearly did not consider himself God. To suggest that he was part of the entity to which he appealed, in an equal form, part of which was impassable, is absurd.

1.5.2 The Doctrine of Antichrist

The doctrine of Antichrist is stated in 1John 4:1-2. The correct ancient text for 1John 4:1-2 is reconstructed from Irenæus, Chapter 16:8 (*ANF*, Vol. 1, fn. p. 443).

Hereby know ye the spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth Jesus Christ came in the flesh is of God; and every spirit which separates Jesus Christ is not of God but is of Antichrist.

Socrates the historian says (VII, 32, p. 381) that the passage had been corrupted by those who wished to *separate the humanity of Jesus Christ from his divinity*.

Christ as Son is not the One True God (Jn. 17:3).

Also in Luke 22:70 they all said: *Are you then the Son of God?*

He replied: ***You are right in saying I am.***

He was recognised as the Son of God in

- * Matthew 27:54 where they said, *Truly this was the Son of God.*
- * Mark 1:1 holds the Gospel to be that of Jesus Christ, *The Son of God.*
- * Luke 1:35 states that the Holy one to be born was to be called the *Son of God.*

To understand that Christ is the Son of God is a revelation from God.

Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but MY FATHER who is in Heaven. (Mat. 16:16-17)

Also Matthew 11:27 states

All things have been delivered to me by MY FATHER and no one knows the Son except the Father. Nor does anyone know the Father except the Son and the one to whom the Son wills to reveal him.

Thus the Father reveals things to individuals and gives them to Christ who then reveals the Father to them.

1.5.3 The Name and Sovereignty of God

There is no doubt that God is singular and sovereign. Proverbs 30:4-5 shows the name of God and that He has a son.

Who hath gone up to heaven, and come down?

Who hath gathered up the wind in the hollow of His hands?

Who hath wrapped up the waters in His cloak?

Who hath established all the ends of the earth?

What is His name and the name of His son? Tell me if you know.

Every word of God [ELOAH] is flawless: He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him.

Do not add to His words, or He will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

The Bible interprets itself and the name of God is directly supplied following the question and it is clear that this entity is not a composite of Father and Son but, rather, He has a son.

Further, the New Testament states clearly that it is the Father who is the object of worship. Christ warned the Samaritan woman in John 4:21 that there was a time coming when they could not worship the Father either on her mountain (Samaria) or in Jerusalem. But he distinctly says in John 4:23

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.

Christ here identifies the object of worship as the Father and not himself. It is thus quite blasphemous to assert that one should worship the uplifted Christ from a perversion of John 3:14 where the Son of man was to be lifted up as Moses had lifted up the serpent in the wilderness. The purpose of the crucifixion was so that man would have eternal life, not that Christ could become an object of worship as is falsely asserted. From this false premise, it is also falsely asserted that Christians worship Christ's body and blood in the Eucharist.

Eloah is the God of the Old Testament and the Temple and the God of Jesus Christ of the New Testament. The Temple at Jerusalem was the House of Eloah (Ezra 4:24; 5:2,13,15,16,17; 6:3,5,7,8,16,17; 7:23). He was the Eloah of Israel (Ezra 5:1; 7:15), the Great Eloah of Heaven (Ezra 5:8,12). He was the object of sacrifice at the Temple (Ezra 6:10) where He had caused His name to dwell (Ezra 6:12). He ordered the Temple's construction (Ezra 6:14) and the priesthood stand in His service (Ezra 6:18; 7:24) and do His will (Ezra 7:18). The law is the law of the Eloah of Heaven (Ezra 7:12,14). Those that know the laws of Eloah are to teach those that know them not (Ezra 7:25) and judgment is to be by the laws of Eloah (Ezra 7:26). This being is the Father who is the singular Eloah and God Most High, the Father of Messiah and all the sons of God.

Chapter 2

The Plan of Salvation

2.1 The Fall of Mankind

Mankind was created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Adam and Eve were cursed because of disobedience (Gen. 3:16-19). As a result of this rebellion, sin and consequently death came upon all humanity (1Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12).

2.2 The Salvation of Humanity

God does not want any flesh to perish (2Pet. 3:9). In order that humanity might escape the penalty for sin, which is death, God instituted a plan of salvation involving a sacrifice in the death and resurrection of His son Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:16). The plan is of a sequential harvest of which Christ is the firstfruits of those who have died (1Cor. 15:20). The plan of salvation is mirrored in the annual Holy Days of the Bible (Lev. 23).

2.3 The Bible as Inspired Truth

Christ said: *It is written Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.* (Mat. 4:4; Lk. 4:4). The Bible is known as Scripture (Dan. 10:21), and is directed towards the salvation of mankind and the manifestation of the power of God (Ex. 9:16; Rom. 9:17). The means of salvation is Jesus Christ (Rom. 10:11) who was foretold by Scripture from Moses and the prophets (Lk. 24:27), prophecy being Scripture (Mat. 26:56; Rom. 1:2). All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2Tim. 3:16).

The Scriptures, at the time of Christ and the apostles were the Old Testament (Mat. 21:42; Mk. 12:10; Acts 17:2). The Old Testament is the Scripture referred to as *God breathed* or *inspired* in 2Timothy 3:16. The New Testament is additional to the Old Testament. It does not replace the Old Testament.

The Old Testament was written in earlier days for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope (Rom. 15:4). Error proceeds from a poor knowledge of those Scriptures (Mat. 22:29; Mk. 12:24). The Bereans (or Bereans KJV) examined the Scriptures daily, proving whether what was said was in fact correct. This was measured as being noble (Acts 17:11). The whole picture of the Bible is taken from all parts of the Scripture, precept upon precept, line upon line (Isa. 28:10). The Scriptures show that Jesus was the Messiah or Christ (Acts 18:28). It is Christ, by means of the Holy Spirit, who opens the mind of all the elect beginning with the apostles, so that the Scriptures can be understood (Lk. 24:45).

The Scriptures of the Old Testament must be fulfilled (Mat. 26:54,56; Mk. 12:10, 14:49) and **cannot be broken** (Jn. 10:35). Much Scripture was directed towards and was fulfilled in Christ, or will be fulfilled in Christ at his second coming (Rev. 1:7, 12:10, 17:14, 19:11-21), which will be in power and glory (Mat. 24:30).

2.4 Repentance and Conversion

For humanity to live, or have eternal life, God requires that it repents. Unless it repents it will perish (Lk. 13:3,5).

Christ was sent to call mankind to repentance (Lk. 11:32). Christ began his ministry after the imprisonment of John the Baptist (Mat. 4:12,17). John's imprisonment took place some time after the Passover of 28 AD (Jn. 3:22-24; Mat. 4:12) being the Passover after the commencement of John's ministry in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (Lk. 3:1). From that time, Jesus began to preach saying *Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand* (Mat. 4:17). Christ charged his disciples to preach the gospel of repentance, giving them authority over the demons or unclean spirits (Mk. 6:7,12; Lk. 10:1,17-20).

Repentance was taught as the prelude to the blotting out of sin (or wickedness) (Acts 8:22) so that the time of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, so that He might send the Christ who was appointed for us (Acts 3:19-20).

The times of ignorance, as it is called, God overlooked but, after Christ, He commands all people to repent, having fixed a day of judgment for them (Acts 17:30). Thus repentance is extended to the Gentiles (see also Acts 15:3).

From repentance and turning to God, the repentant sinner must then perform deeds worthy of repentance (Acts 26:20).

The Church in Ephesus was called on to repent and remember what it was from which they had fallen, and to do again the works they did at first (Rev. 2:5). Likewise the Church in Pergamum was called upon to repent (Rev. 2:16). So also was the Church in Thyatira (Rev. 2:21-22) which had apostates thrown onto a bed with the false religious teachers. The Church in Sardis was also called on to repent or Christ would come on them like a thief in the night and they would not know what hour he was coming (Rev. 3:3). Those who Christ loves he reproves and chastens. He demands that they (in this case the Laodiceans), are zealous and that they repent (Rev. 3:19). Repentance is thus ongoing for all the Churches of God, being the responsibility of all (Jas. 5:19-20).

2.5 Baptism

All authority was conferred on Christ following on from his resurrection (Mat. 28:18). He commanded that his disciples go and make disciples of all nations baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Mat. 28:19). Teaching them to do all that Christ commanded. Thus he would be with them always until the end of the age (Mat. 28:20).

Repentance must be accompanied by baptism for the conferring of the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). You cannot receive the Holy Spirit unless you repent and are baptised, thus being born again. Unless you are born anew you cannot enter the Kingdom of God (Jn. 3:3,5). Repentance is conditional to baptism and receipt of the Holy Spirit. Thus infant baptism is logically precluded as contrary to the Bible. The precondition of repentance was emphasised by the mission of John the Baptist who was

the precursor to the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Christ (Mk. 1:4,8). John stated that Christ would baptise with the Holy Spirit and with fire, concerning the unrepentant (described as *chaff*) (Lk. 3:16-17). The Holy Spirit is conferred at the direction of God. By request, signified by the laying on of hands, the Holy Spirit enters the individual. The Spirit is thus conferred for every aspect of the work. The Holy Spirit operates from before baptism in dealing with each individual. The Spirit draws the elect to God through Christ (Heb. 7:25). The firstfruits of the Spirit are given to the individual at baptism, from Romans 8:23, which clearly states that the **adoption** does not occur until the *redemption of the body*. Thus we are *born again* but continue to grow in the spirit daily in Christ Jesus until we come into the glory of God.

This conferring of the Holy Spirit on baptism is the *water of the wells of salvation* promised by God through His prophets (Isa. 12:3). This water of the Holy Spirit was God's promise to Jacob recorded in Isaiah 44:3. The Lord God is the fountain of living water (Jer. 2:13, 17:13; also Zech. 14:8). This is the *river of the water of life* (Rev. 22:1). Christ, speaking of the Spirit (Jn. 7:39), said from him *living waters flow* (Jn. 4:10-14, 7:38 cf. Isa. 12:3, 55:1, 58:11; Ezek. 47:1). Israel is spiritually cleaned by water from Ezekiel 36:25, which is the water of life or the Holy Spirit. The elect take of this water without price (Rev. 22:17).

Chapter 3

Doctrines Governing Human Responsibility

3.1 Prayer and Worship

3.1.1 God as the Object of Prayer and Worship

3.1.1.1 The Object of Worship

The primary position and the principal sign of the elect is and always has been that of absolute monotheism and a belief in the subordinate relationship of Jesus Christ. We worship no other Elohim other than God (Ex. 34:14; Deut. 11:16) or we will be destroyed (Deut. 30:17-18). God gave His **First** Commandment as

I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other God(s) (elohim) before me (Ex. 20:2).

The concept of *before* here is that of *beside* as *in place of* or *without the authority of* the God we understand to be God the Father.

We are to love the Lord our God and to serve Him with all our heart and all our soul, i.e. our being, and in return we will have rain in due season giving crops and pasture for our flocks. In other words, we will be fed with plenty (Deut. 11:13-15). But we have a New Covenant where the Lord establishes His laws in our minds and writes them on our hearts. He **is** our God and we **are** His servants, worshipping **Him**, by keeping His laws in our very nature (Heb 8:10-13).

We are to worship before the Lord our God (Deut. 26:10; 1Sam. 1:3, 15:25). This God is the One True God who is God the Father. The requirement for eternal life is that we know Him and His son Jesus Christ (Jn. 17:3). We ascribe to the Lord, the glory of His name; we worship the Lord in holy array (Ps. 29:2, 96:9). All the earth worships Him and sings praises to His name (Ps. 66:4). This is prophecy and will come about. All nations which He has made will come and bow down, trembling (Ps. 96:9) before Him, glorifying His name, for He alone is God (Ps. 86:9-10), the Lord our maker. He is our God and we are the sheep of His hand (Ps. 95:6-7). He is Holy (Ps. 99:5,9). The understanding of whom we worship is also demonstrated by two signs which together with the understanding of the nature of God form the basis of the sealing of the elect. The two signs are:

1. **The Sabbath** (from Ex. 20:8,10,11; Deut. 5:12). The Sabbath is the sign between us and God who makes us holy (Ex. 31:12-14); and

2. **The Passover.** The Passover is a **sign or seal** where, from Exodus 13:9,16, the Passover, including the Feast of Unleavened Bread, is the sign of the law of the Lord (Deut. 6:8) and of His redemption of Israel (Deut. 6:10) which, from the New Testament, extends to all those in Christ (Rom. 9:6, 11:25-26).

These signs of the law, the Sabbath and Passover, are specifically intended to guard against idolatry (Deut. 11:16). These two signs are the seal on the hand and the forehead of the Lord's elect and, with the Holy Spirit, will form the basis of the sealing of the 144,000 of the last days in Revelation 7:3. They lead into the rest of the Holy Days.

Christ said: *You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you worship (or serve)* (Mat. 4:10; Lk. 4:8). Thus service is worship in biblical terms.

Worship of God through the precepts of men is worship in vain (Mat. 15:8-9). For the Father desires men to worship Him in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:21-24). For we are the true circumcision, who worship God in spirit and glory in Christ Jesus (Phil. 3:3). All of the Council of the Elders, including Christ, worship before God who created all things and by whose will they were created and existed (Rev. 4:10). By command of Christ, both in the law (Ex. 20:3) and by revelation, we worship God (Rev. 22:9).

3.1.1.2 **The Object of Prayer**

Humanity prays to the Lord God (Ps. 39:12, 54:2) who hears. Whatever you ask in prayer you will receive if you have faith (Mat. 21:22). Christ was the example to mankind of prayer to his God and our God who is the Father (Lk. 6:12). The example of how to pray is found in The Lord's Prayer which is a blueprint of the structure of prayer given by Christ (Lk. 11:2-4).

The primary objective of the elect and the ministry is prayer and the ministry or service of the word (Acts 6:4). The Council of the Elders is given responsibility for the monitoring of the prayers of the saints (Rev. 5:8).

3.1.1.3 **Individual and Collective Prayer on Behalf of Others**

Collective prayer of one accord is an example of the apostles (Acts 1:14). This is taken up by the whole Church (Acts 12:5).

Prayer is not just for the Church; it is for those who have a zeal but are not enlightened and do not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end (or objective) of the law that everyone who has faith may be justified (Rom. 10:1-4).

Prayer renders assistance. Blessings granted in answer to many prayers are appropriately given thanks for, also by many prayers (2Cor. 1:11). Prayer must be in the spirit (Eph. 6:18). It must be persevering prayer (Col. 4:2-4) and this is an aid to the ability to stand firm in truth and righteousness (Eph. 6:14).

The prayer of a righteous person is of great power in its effect. The prayer of faith will heal the sick and ensure the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, we confess our sins one to another and pray for one another that we may be healed (Jas. 5:15-16).

3.2 **The Relationship Between Salvation and the Law**

3.2.1 **God is Our Rock**

God is our rock, our strength and our salvation, in whom we take refuge (Ps. 18:1-2). We trust in Him and are not afraid (Isa. 12:2). The knowledge of salvation is a function of Christ and the prophets (Lk. 1:77). This knowledge is extended to the Church where the saints are stewards of the mysteries of God (1Cor. 4:1). Salvation is from the Jews (Jn. 4:22), but was extended in Christ to those who worship God in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:23-24). There is salvation in no other name under heaven given among men that we

might be saved (Acts 4:12). Thus salvation was given by the gospel, being the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, first coming to the Jews and then to the Gentiles. In the gospel, the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith, for he who through faith is righteous shall live (Rom. 1:14-17). God did not destine humanity for wrath but to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ (1Thes. 5:9).

The understanding of God results in godly grief, which produces repentance that leads to salvation (2Cor. 7:10). Thus the gospel is the word of truth and is, hence, the gospel of salvation, resulting in the sealing of the repentant with the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13). Salvation is obtained from the sacred writings or Scripture. Being inspired by God, Scripture is able to instruct the repentant for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (2Tim. 3:15-16). Although he was **a** Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered. Being **made** perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him (Heb. 5:8-9).

Thus, he was offered once to deal with sin and will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who eagerly await him (Heb. 9:28). Salvation is thus common to all and was once and for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). Thus, there is no revelation after that given to Jesus Christ by God and handed to John. All that is required for the salvation of mankind is contained in the Bible. Salvation and power and glory belong to God and He has revealed it to His servants through Christ and it is not to be altered (Rev. 22:18-19).

The final sealing of the saints is thus through the Holy Spirit being based on the law of God as revealed in the Bible from the Old Testament commencing with revelation in the law.

Christ gave the law at Sinai as the Angel of the Covenant or Presence, the Angel of Yahovah. He said that

... till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but he who does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven ... (Mat. 5:18-19).

Thus Christ in no way diminished the law. He kept the law and commanded people to do likewise. The law and the prophets were until John. From John, the good news of the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone *enters it violently* (or *is pressed into it*) (Lk. 16:16).

But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one dot of the law to become void (Lk. 16:16-17).

The law was given through Moses, yet it was not kept (Jn. 7:19). Those who sin without the law, will perish without the law. Those who sin under the law will perish under the law (Rom. 2:12) for sin is lawlessness or transgression of the law (1Jn 3:4). Circumcision is of the heart and the keeping of the tenets of the law is the measure of circumcision. He who keeps the law is circumcised of heart, while he who is circumcised and does not keep the law is as though he is an infidel. Those who are Jews are those who keep the law from their hearts being Jews inwardly. However, those who say they are Jews, and are not, come into condemnation (Rev. 3:9) and will be made to prostrate themselves before the saints. (This prostration is also translated as *worship* and is applied to Christ and the elect).

The law is holy and the commandments are holy and just and good (Rom. 7:12). The law, then, does not cause death but rather sin, which is transgression of the law, working within the individual (Rom. 7:13).

The law is spiritual but humanity is carnal, sold under sin (Rom. 7:14). The truly converted person delights in the law of God in their inner selves (Ps. 119:1ff.; Rom. 7:22). For the law leads men to Christ, who is the end of the law (Rom. 10:4). Being led by the Spirit liberates the individual from being under the law (Gal. 5:18). Not because it does away with the law but rather it enables the law to be kept from inner desire and

right action, being in our very nature (Heb. 8:10-13). The law of God is pursued by faith and not by works (Rom. 9:32). Obedience to the commandments is a necessary prerequisite to the retention of the Holy Spirit which dwells in those who keep God's commandments (1Jn. 3:24; Acts 5:32). Thus it is impossible to be a Christian and love God and Christ without keeping the law. This, of necessity, involves keeping the Sabbath as the Fourth Commandment.

3.2.2 Salvation by Grace

The grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all men, training us to renounce all irreligious and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope and appearance of the glory of the great God and the saviour of us; Jesus Christ (Tit. 2:11 see Marshall's *RSV Interlinear Greek-English New Testament*). Christ is thus the appearance of the glory of the Great God who is our Saviour (Tit. 2:10). Grace is thus a product of the activity of Jesus Christ.

The Church is guarded by God's power through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1Pet. 1:5). The outcome of faith is the salvation of the soul. The prophets prophesied about the salvation but did not know the time or the person of Messiah when they predicted his suffering and subsequent glory (1Pet. 1:9-10).

Sin came into the world through Adam and reigned from Adam to Moses. Death was the result of sin (Rom. 5:12). Sin existed before the law was given to Moses (Rom. 5:13). Thus the consequences of the law were already known from Adam, as sin is not counted where there is no law. Grace thereby abounded because of the redemption of man from sin and the law. Where sin increased, under the law, grace abounded (Rom. 5:15-21). By one man's obedience many will be made righteous by grace which reigns through righteousness to eternal life in the anointed Jesus (Rom. 5:20-21).

There is thus no condemnation for those who are in Christ (Rom. 8:1). The law is thus fulfilled in us who walk according to the Spirit (Rom. 8:4).

The Spirit directs the mind according to its purpose (Rom. 8:5). The mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law and indeed cannot submit to the law (Rom. 8:7). Thus, the carnal or unconverted mind is identified by its resistance to the keeping of the laws of God.

The Spirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead lives in the Christian, giving life through the Spirit dwelling in the individual (Rom. 8:11). All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (Rom. 8:14) and this is by the grace of God. The law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (Jn. 1:17). We thus cry *Abba* or *Father* developing the same Sonship (Rom. 8:15) as was given to our brother Jesus Christ.

The law itself does not provide justification. A person is justified through faith in Jesus Christ (Gal. 2:16). The life they live is by faith in the Son of God (Gal. 2:20). Through the law, we die to the law that we might live to God (Gal. 2:19). But we do not nullify the grace of God by keeping the law because we are not justified by the law (Gal. 2:21). We keep the law because the Spirit directs us and the law proceeds from the very nature of God which we have put on and of which we are partakers (2Pet. 1:4), as is Christ.

We are saved not by law but by the grace of Jesus Christ (Acts 15:11). Sin has no dominion over the elect because they are not under the law but under grace and are slaves to God (Rom. 6:14,15). Nevertheless, we do not sin by transgressing the law because we are slaves of God and righteousness and not of sin, becoming obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which we were committed (Rom. 6:17-18). Whereas, before we were dead through our trespasses, we are now made alive together with Christ by grace (Eph. 2:5). We have been raised up with and seated with Christ in the heavenly places so that God may show in the coming ages the extent and richness of His grace and kindness to us through Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6-7). For by grace we have been saved through faith. This is not the doing of the individual; it is the gift of God and

not because of works so that no person can boast (Eph. 2:9). Thus, we keep the law through the Spirit of God by grace.

3.2.3 Obligation under the Law

There is an ongoing obligation to keep the law which does not pass away, nor is it altered as we have seen (Mat. 5:18; Lk. 16:17). It was not kept correctly by the Jews at the time of Christ (Jn. 7:19), being altered by tradition (Mat. 15:2-3,6; Mk. 7:3,5,8-9,13) into a burden or yoke by the Jewish teachers of the day, making a trial of God (Acts 15:10).

There is, from above, a continuing obligation to keep the commandments of God. It is extant and will not pass away until the end of the ages which concern human existence.

3.2.3.1 Why Christians Keep The Law

Christians are saved by grace and not by the law. Why then is it axiomatic that they acknowledge and keep the law? Because:

The Law of God emanates from the abiding goodness of His nature.

The law of God proceeds from the nature of God and thus it stands forever because God Himself is unchangeable, being essentially Good as the centre of ultimate goodness. In Mark 10:18 Christ said: *Why call me good? God alone is good or Why ask me about what is good? One there is who is good. If you would enter life keep the commandments* (Mat. 19:17). God's goodness leads each of us towards repentance (Rom. 2:4). The nature of God is of unchangeable goodness. The heavenly Host partake of His nature. Thus, they become constant in the divine nature and goodness.

In this way, Christ is the same yesterday, today and unto the ages (*aioonas*) (Heb. 13:8). The elect, by partaking of the divine nature (2Pet. 1:4), become part of a divine priesthood, that of Melchisedek which is intransmissible (*aparabaton*) or unchangeable unto the age (*aioona*) (Heb. 7:24). Christ is able to save in entirety those approaching God through him (see Heb. 7:25 Marshall's **Greek-English Interlinear**). But he is not the object of worship nor the God that commands by will.

The law of God is to be pursued by **faith** and not by works (Rom. 9:32). We have a New Covenant where the Lord establishes His laws in our minds and writes them on our hearts. He **is** our God and we **are** His servants, worshipping **Him**, by keeping His laws in our very nature (Heb. 8:10-13). Thus, outward signs are nothing. It is the keeping the commandments of God within us that circumcises us (1Cor. 7:19) as Christians and members of spiritual Israel. It is those who enrage the dragon by keeping the commandments of God. The keeping of the commandments of God identifies them in the persecutions (Rev. 12:17). These are the saints who keep the commandments of God and endure (Rev. 14:12).

3.3.2. Christians as the Temple of God

The saints are the Temple or shrine, the *naos*, of God and God's Spirit dwells in them. If anyone destroys God's Temple, God will destroy him. For God's Temple is holy and that Temple we are (1Cor. 3:16-17). For this reason, there are obligations on Christians to maintain their own bodies in a healthy state as fit receptacles for the Spirit of God. For God has said that He will live in us, and move among us, and He will be our God. We are to be kept holy and separate. God is to be our Father and we are to be His children (2Cor. 6:16-18 loosely quotes a number of OT texts; Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 37:27; Isa. 52:11; 2Sam. 7:14).

For this reason, the Christian should not be mismated with unbelievers (2Cor. 6:14). They should cleanse themselves from every defilement of body and spirit, making holiness perfect in the fear of God (2Cor. 7:1). They are thus chosen from the beginning and saved through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth (2Thes. 2:14). Truth is thus mandatory to mental health and a mark of the elect. It can be seen from this development that the general laws of the Bible have specific meaning and purpose.

The measurement of the Temple of God takes place in accordance with these laws (Rev. 11:1).

3.2.4 The Ten Commandments

The Church is committed to the keeping of the Ten Commandments as found in Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21.

The First Commandment is

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.

God the Father is the one true God (Jn. 17:3) and there is no elohim that is before, or equal with, Him. It is impermissible to worship or to pray to any other entity including Jesus Christ.

The Second Commandment is

You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to those who love me and keep my commandments.

It is thus impermissible to make figures or likenesses of any description for use in religious worship or symbolism. The crucifix is thus forbidden to the church as a symbol.

The commandments themselves form part of the identification of the religious system and are thus all entrenched.

The Third Commandment is

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

The name of the Lord God confers authority and, hence, this law deals not only with simple profanity but extends to the misuse of the authority of the Church and all those who purport to act at the direction of God through Jesus Christ.

The Fourth Commandment is

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, or your manservant, or your maidservant, or your cattle, or the sojourner who is within your gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

The seventh day Sabbath is thus mandatory to the faith. No Christian can serve God and fail to honour the Sabbath, known in the current calendar as Saturday. The establishment of another day of worship other than the seventh day not only breaches this commandment it becomes itself a symbol of idolatry being external to the express will of God. It is an act of rebellion and hence the equivalent of witchcraft (1Sam. 15:23). Linked with the Second Commandment which entrenches the Fourth it becomes idolatry. The establishment of a calendar which adjusts the week on a rotational basis has the same effect.

These first four commandments determine the relationship of man to God and are identified under the first and major head of the law, namely: **you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind (and with all your strength Mk. 12:30). This is the Great and First Commandment (Mat. 22:37-38).**

The absolute identification with God stems from the faithful adherence to these commandments and the avoidance of any action which would prejudice them.

The Second Great Commandment is

You shall love your neighbour as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these (Mat. 22:39; Mk. 12:31).

The Second Great Commandment is embodied in the relationships advanced under the last six commandments of the ten and these relate to humanity.

The Fifth Commandment is

Honour your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

The family relationship is the fundamental building block of any people and reflects the attitudes displayed in the wider religious structure.

The Sixth Commandment is

You shall not kill.

Christians are judged by the higher law of not being angry with their brother. To harbour anger is to do violence to your neighbour. Whoever is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be liable to Gehenna (or the grave or hell) (Mat. 5:22).

The Seventh Commandment is

You shall not commit adultery.

Christians are judged by the higher law of lust after another person who is not their spouse (Mat. 5:28).

The Eighth Commandment is

You shall not steal.

To steal is to do violence to your neighbour and to breach your relationship with God.

The Ninth Commandment is

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.

Righteousness and justice are essentially the same concepts being the same word in Hebrew. Thus, a Christian cannot be righteous without being just. The perversion of justice by false testimony interferes with the salvation of the Christian.

The Tenth Commandment is

You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbour's.

Covetousness is a process which places material goods or a sexual relationship above one's relationship with God. It is in this sense idolatry. It makes another object the focus of desire and is in contravention of the other commandments. In this sense, the commandments are circular in that covetousness becomes a precursor to the breach of the others and, hence, the breach of one aspect of the law breaches it entirely. There is thus no relativity of sin. Sin is the transgression of the law. Christ gave an explanation of the true understanding of the law in Matthew 5:21-48; dealing with Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17, 16:18 and also Luke 12:57-59.

The commandments are to be taught by all parents to their children on an ongoing basis. They are to be a sign on the hand and the forehead (by thought and action) and placed on the door posts of the house (Deut. 11:18-20).

3.2.5 Other Laws Governing Human Conduct

3.2.5.1 The Food Laws

The food laws are found in Leviticus 11:1-47 and Deuteronomy 14:4-21. They are based on the regulation of the human body in a proper state of health and are based on sound physical principles. The command is to be holy and the body rendered as a fit receptacle for the Holy Spirit. There is a sound scientific basis for the food laws. Consumption of

blood is prohibited by Deuteronomy 12:16 and together with fat is prohibited by Leviticus 3:17. Nothing that dies of itself or is torn is to be eaten (Ezek. 44:31). The prohibitions on the eating of fruit in the laws governing fruit are found at Leviticus 19:23-26. These laws have spiritual implications.

3.2.5.2 The Sabbath

The seventh day Sabbath is to be kept (from Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15) as an express commandment of the Lord and one of the Ten Commandments. These are inviolate statutes forever to all people. The Sabbath is holy. Anyone who profanes the Sabbath suffers death and is cut off from their people (Ex. 31:14-15). It is a perpetual covenant between the people of Israel and is a sign forever between them and God, acknowledging Him as creator (Ex. 31:15-16). All Christians are spiritual Israel and all Gentiles are ultimately to come into the nation of Israel. Therefore, the Sabbath is a sign between God and His people for all time. The punishment for profaning the Sabbath is the death entailed in forfeiting the Holy Spirit and being consigned to the second resurrection (see Rev. 20:5). The Sabbath is a delight and is to be honoured as the Holy Day of the Lord. It is not a day of idle pleasure but of sacred assembly (Isa. 58:13-14). No work or burdens are to be carried on it (Jer. 17:21-22).

Our Lord kept the Sabbath during his life (Mk. 6:2). The apostles kept the Sabbath (and Holy Days) and we are to keep the Sabbaths. The Lord will reintroduce the Sabbath, New Moons and Holy Days by force of law again in the millennial restoration of the last days under Messiah's government, punishing the nations which do not comply (Isa. 66:22-23; Zech. 14:16-19).

3.2.5.3 The New Moons

The New Moons are required to be kept under the law (Num. 10:10, 28:11-15; 1Chron. 23:31; 2Chron. 2:4, 8:13, 31:3). Trading is suspended at this time as for the Sabbath (Amos 8:5). Israel kept the New Moons (Isa. 1:13-14; Ezra 3:5; Neh. 10:33; Ps. 81:3; Hos. 2:11) as did the Church over the centuries. The Church kept the New Moons with the Sabbath and Holy Days (Col. 2:16). The New Moons will be kept in the restoration under Messiah as a Sabbath (Isa. 66:23; Ezek. 45:17, 46:1.3.6).

3.2.5.4 The Annual Holy Days

The annual Holy Days are found at Leviticus 23:1-44 and Deuteronomy 16:1-16. These annual Holy Days mirror the plan of salvation of the Lord. The Holy Days consist of:

- * The Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread
- * Pentecost
- * The Feast of Trumpets
- * The Day of Atonement
- * The Feast of Tabernacles or Booths
- * The Last Great Day.

They are mandatory and carry specific requirements as signs between God and His people. The Holy Day is treated as a Sabbath.

3.2.5.5 Marriage

Marriage is a holy institution. It represents the union of Christ and the Church under God (Rev. 19:7,9). This parable is explained in Matthew 22:2-14. It is a progressive institution with Christ (Mat. 25:10) based on spiritual readiness. From the time of the final reconciliation there will be no more marriage. Marriage was made for man and is not an institution of the Host (Mat. 22:30). Thus, when humans rise from the dead they neither marry nor are given in marriage (Mk. 12:25). This is when they are counted worthy to attain to the next age through the resurrection. They are then equal to angels and are Sons of God (Lk. 20:34-36).

Thus, marriage is an institution designed for humans and will cease to exist after the human phase of the creation is finished. From the creation of Adam, the institution was established so that a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh (Gen. 2:24).

A wife is a wife by covenant and the Lord desires godly offspring from this. The Lord hates divorce, which is violence (Mal. 2:16). Divorce was permitted by Moses but Christians are not to put away their spouse except for unchastity (Mat. 5:31-32). What God has joined is not to be separated by man (Mat. 19:3-12). While an unbelieving spouse consents to live with a believing spouse then the marriage should remain (1Cor. 7:10-16).

3.2.6 Financial Stewardship

3.2.6.1 Towards God

Financial responsibilities towards God are found from Deuteronomy 12:5-19. It is the responsibility of every Christian to support the activities of the Church. The principle is derived from the tithe as offered to God through the priesthood and the Levites from the occupation of Israel (Deut. 12:9-14) and precedes the Temple. The temple tax was taken up on Atonement. A levy was taken up as recorded in Nehemiah 10:32. The work is ongoing through the establishment of the millennial reign of Messiah (Mal. 3:1-6). At Malachi 3:7, God orders the return of the nation to Him and He will return to them. The return is effected with the work of God and the funding of that work by tithes (Mal. 3:7). Failure to pay tithes is equated to robbing God (Mal. 3:8-10).

The payment of tithes, where collectively followed, ensures that the work of God can go on and the fruits of the land are ensured by God in return (Mal. 3:10-12).

The responsibility of the Church to God is extant from the apostles even if not always exercised, or it is waived by the ministry (2Cor. 12:13-18). For Christ despatched elders, two by two, and they were to be supported in the work by the congregation with which they worked (Lk. 10:1-12). Those who are employed in the temple services and proclaim the gospel should be supported by the gospel (1Cor. 9:13-14). It is the responsibility of the Church to provide for those who labour in teaching and evangelism on a full time basis (1Tim. 5:17-18; cf. Deut 24:14-15).

Tithes are acceptable to God except where expressly stated as being from dishonest gain or where sacrificed to idols (1Cor. 10:27). Tithes are paid to the Church so that it may assist those of its number in need (1Tim. 5:9-10,16). Tithes are to be collected on a local conference basis and the tithe of the tithe is to be paid to the headquarters conference as carried out from Numbers 18:26 and Nehemiah 10:37-39. The law on firstfruits requires prompt payment (Ex. 22:29). The first of the firstfruits is to be brought before God immediately at the beginning of the feasts; and particularly on the first evening of *Ingathering* or Tabernacles (Ex. 23:19). The firstborn is also holy to the Lord (Num. 18:15-18).

3.2.6.2 Towards Others

He who does not provide for his relatives and especially for his own family denies the faith and is worse than an infidel (1Tim. 5:8).

No Christian is to oppress or withhold the wages of any person (Deut. 24:15). They are to pay all moneys owed and, in the Sabbath year, to forgive debts owed by another of the faith (Deut. 15:1-3; Neh. 10:31).

Tithing for the feasts is regulated by a number of texts. The second tithe is not to be consumed within the domicile but at the place which the Lord shall choose (Deut. 12:17-19).

In the third year of the sabbatical cycle, tithes are to be paid for the welfare of the poor (Deut. 14:28, 26:12). Third tithe years fall on the years 1994-95, 2001-02, 2008-09,

2015-16, 2022-23, 2030-31. The sacred year 2030-31 is the first *third tithe year* of the new Jubilee cycle or the new Millennium. This is based on the Jubilee years falling in 27-28 and 77-78 years from Ezekiel 1:1. The third tithe obligation may be waived or varied according to the Church constitution in areas where the social security system is adequate.

The Sabbath year is a year of rest for the land, the vineyards and the orchards so that the poor may eat and the natural fauna may eat (Ex. 23:10-11). Sabbath years fall on the sacred years 1998-99, 2005-06, 2012-13, 2019-20, 2026-27 with the Jubilee year falling in 2027-28.

He who is kind to the poor lends to the Lord and He will repay him for his deed (Prov. 19:17) and he will not want (Prov. 28:27), also having treasure in heaven (Mk. 10:21). God is able to provide so that you may provide for every good work not only supplying the wants of the saints but overflowing in thanksgiving to God (2Cor. 9:6-12).

3.2.7 Warfare and Voting

3.2.7.1 Warfare

The saints are priests of the Most High God. It is unfitting for any Christian to take the life of another (Ex. 20:13; Mat. 5:38-48; Lk. 6:27-36). If Christ's servants were of the world they would fight that they might not be handed over to the worldly authorities (Jn. 18:36). Although they live in the world, they are not carrying on a worldly war (2Cor. 10:3). The weapons used by the elect have divine power to destroy strongholds (2Cor. 10:4). Thus, it is the obligation of Christians to support the government of their country and to work in prayer and honest obedience to the well being of their nation, that God may protect them through His power.

3.2.7.2 Voting

Christians are to uphold the laws of the land except where in direct conflict with biblical law. Where required by law to vote, Christians may exercise witness by voting where there is no conflict with biblical principle. The choosing of leaders by election is derived from Deuteronomy 1:9-14 and the end time or millennial prophecy of Hosea 1:11. The involvement in political struggle is seen as an extension of warfare.

Chapter 4

Doctrine Concerning the Messiah

4.1 The Pre-existence of Christ

Jesus Christ had pre-existence as a spiritual being. He existed from the beginning of the creation (Jn. 1:1) being the first begotten of the creation (Col. 1:15) and, hence, the beginning of the creation of God (Rev. 3:14). He was the being referred to in the Old Testament as the Angel of Yahovah, the Angel of the Presence or the Covenant. He was the Angel who brought Israel out of Egypt and through the Red Sea. He was the Angel in the Cloud and the Angel that spoke to Moses at Sinai (Acts 7:35-38). He was the El Bethel or the El, the God or High Priest of the House of God (Gen. 28:17,21-22, 31:11-13; Heb. 3:1). Christ was the Angel of HaElohim (Gen. 31:11-13). He was appointed as elohim by his elohim (Ps. 45:6-7) who was God the Father. He was faithful to Him who appointed him, as a son, just as Moses was also faithful in God's house (Heb. 3:2), but as a servant.

Christ came into the world to bear witness to the truth (Jn. 18:37). His Kingdom is yet to come to the earth. He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of times for our sake (1Pet. 1:20).

4.2 The Crucifixion and Resurrection

Christ was sent into the world to save mankind by taking away the sin of the world (Mat. 1:21, 9:6; Mk. 3:28) as the lamb (Rev. 5:6-8). He was slain from the foundation of the world as an exercise of God's divine prescience (Rev. 13:8).

Unless humanity believes that Christ is Messiah they will die in their sins (Jn. 8:24).

Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures and he was buried and raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures (1Cor. 15:3-4), appearing to more than five hundred brethren (1Cor. 15:5-6). Christ was already risen before the day called Sunday or the first day of the week (Jn. 20:1; see also the questionable Mk. 16:9-10, note tense re *after he had risen*). He was stated to have been three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as the Sign of Jonah (Mat. 12:39-40; see also Lk. 24:6-8).

Christ was crucified (Mat. 27:32-50; Mk. 15:24-37; Lk. 23:33-46; Jn. 19:23-30) at about the third hour, i.e. 9am (Mk. 15:25), until the ninth hour, i.e. 3pm (Mk. 15:33), of 14 Nisan. There is no proof as to whether this was on a stake or the later development of a T cross. Regardless of this, the cross is not taken as a symbol of the faith, stemming from ancient non-Christian superstition.

Christ was crucified and is risen (Mk. 16:6). On his resurrection he ascended to his Father and our Father and his God and our God (Jn. 20:11-18). He sits on God's right hand with angels, authorities and powers subject to him (1Pet. 3:22).

Christ gave the power to forgive and retain sins to the Church through the apostles (Jn. 20:22-23).

4.3 The Second Coming of Christ

Christ came first as the sacrifice for the redemption of sin. He did not come first as King Messiah and this was misunderstood by the Jews of his day. They expected a conquering king (Mat. 27:11,29,37; Lk. 23:2-3, 37-38; Jn. 19:14-16). Nevertheless, he was acknowledged by some through the Holy Spirit as the King of Israel (Jn. 1:49, 12:13-15) thus fulfilling prophecy (Zech. 9:9).

Jesus will come again in power, accompanied by the Host of heaven (Mat. 25:31) as King Messiah (Rev. 17:14). His coming will be clearly visible as lightning in the heavens (Mat. 24:27). He will reign in power with the resurrected saints (Rev. 20:4).

He will destroy the man of sin at his coming (2Thes. 2:8) and subsequently the world powers. The man of sin will come to power through the activity of Satan with power and pretended signs and wonders (2Thes. 2:9). This apostasy is sent upon the Temple of God because they did not love the truth and so be saved. Therefore, God sends upon them a strong delusion to make them believe what is false because they do not hold fast to the truth in the first place (2Thes. 2:10-12). The Lord will destroy this apostate system with the breath of his mouth and the appearance of his coming (2Thes. 2:8).

4.4 The Millennial Reign of Christ

Christ will establish a reign on this planet for a thousand years with the resurrected saints (Rev. 20:3-4). Satan will be bound for a thousand years and sealed in the bottomless pit or *tartaroo*, the place of the fallen angels (2Pet. 2:4). The saints, those beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and the word of God and those who had not worshipped the beast and its image or received its mark on their foreheads or hands, will be resurrected and will reign with Christ for the thousand years (Rev. 20:4). This is the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5). The rest of the dead do not come to life until the thousand years are ended (Rev. 20:5). This is the second or general resurrection.

During this thousand-year period, Christ will re-establish the Kingdom according to the biblical laws he gave at Sinai. This will occur from the day that he stands on the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4,6 ff). The nations will wage war against Jerusalem and will be destroyed (Zech. 14:12). Everyone that survives of the nations shall go up every year to

worship the Lord of Hosts and keep the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles (Zech. 14:16). The Sabbath, New Moons and Holy Days will be mandatory and the law will issue from Jerusalem. Those nations which do not send their emissaries to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles will receive no rain *in due season* (Zech. 14:16-19).

At the end of the Millennium, Satan will be released again to deceive the nations over all the earth (Rev. 20:7-8). They will again be gathered for battle, but will be destroyed by fire (Rev. 20:9); and then Satan will be destroyed. The general resurrection will then occur, and the Judgment (Rev. 20:13-15).

Chapter 5

The Problem of Evil

5.1 The Existence of Evil through the Rebellion of the Host

Satan was cast out of heaven for the sin of rebellion, which because it seeks to establish a will equal to or superior to God the Father, is idolatry (or witchcraft as stated in 1Sam. 15:23). Satan sought to make himself equal to the Most High or God the Father. Christ, on the other hand, did not seek to make himself equal to God, subordinating his will (Jn. 4:34).

[He] being in the very nature of God did not consider equality with God something to be grasped. But made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name... (Phil. 2:6)

Thus God exalted Christ through obedience because he did not seek equality with Him and did not seek to depose God, as a third of the **elohim** and **bene elohim** had indeed sought to do.

In Luke 10:18 Christ said that he saw Satan fall, like lightning, from heaven. Satan drew a third part of the Angels or Stars of Heaven (Rev. 12:4). These angels were cast out with Satan to the earth (Rev. 12:9). This desolation is symbolised by the desolation referred to in Revelation 8:10 where the third angel demonstrates again the desolation caused by the fall of a Star of the Host desolating a third of the creation. The Host was desolated by the rebellion. The Host are the Tabernacle of God in heaven. The rebellion saw a third of that tabernacle removed and the system of the earth utters blasphemy against the name of God and His dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven (Rev. 13:6). Thus, God dwells in both the heavenly tabernacle which is the heavenly Host and also the elect, who are the earthly dwelling of God.

5.2 The Doctrines Concerning Predestination

It is God through Christ, by means of the Holy Spirit, who opens the mind of all the elect beginning with the apostles, so that the Scriptures can be understood (Lk. 24:45). Christ spoke in parables so that those who were not chosen would not understand. Thus, they would turn and be saved (Mat. 13:10-17) before they were capable of entering into judgment. God is merciful and does not wish anyone to perish. Thus by His divine prescience each is called according to His purpose. For those He foreknew, He predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son in order that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. And those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified. What then shall we say to this? If God is for us, who is against us? (Rom. 8:28-31).

5.3 The State of the Dead

The state of the dead is silence (Ps. 115:17) and darkness (Ps. 143:3). There is no eternally existing soul. One fate comes to all people (Eccl. 9:3). The dead know nothing (Eccl. 9:5).

Some of the ancient dead have no resurrection (Isa. 26:14; see Companion Bible notation and Interlinears).

The dead of the saints are termed *sleeping* or *those who have fallen asleep* (see Mat. 9:24; Jn. 11:11; 1Cor. 11:30, 15:6,18,51; 1Thes. 4:13-15; 2Pet. 3:4).

5.4 The Resurrection of the Dead

God does work wonders for the dead and those who are dead will rise up to praise Him (Ps. 88:10). His steadfast love is declared from the grave (Ps. 88:11) when the dead are resurrected. For Job knew that his redeemer lives (Job 19:25) and at last he will stand upon the earth. After Job had been destroyed, he knew that from his flesh he would see God, who would be on his side, and his eyes should see Him and not another[*'s eyes*] (Job 19:25-27).

Christ raised the dead that we might know that he is the Messiah (Mat. 11:4-5). Lazarus was an example of this power (Jn. 11:11). This concept of the resurrection as attributed to the Messiah was well known and expected by the authorities of his day (Mat. 14:2).

It was understood that we should not all sleep but that we should all be changed, at the last trumpet (1Cor. 15:51). Thus, the brethren will pass over generations and fall asleep, but at the last days the Messiah will come while others of the saints live. Thus all will be changed into immortal spiritual bodies (1Cor. 15:44 ff). Those who have fallen asleep will be raised. Those who are alive who are left until the coming of the Lord will not precede those who have fallen asleep (1Thes. 4:13-15). The Lord will descend from heaven with the archangel's call and the sound of the trumpet of God, and the dead will rise first, and those who are alive, who are left, shall be caught up together and thus always be with the Lord (1Thes. 4:16-17).

From the resurrection, the millennial rule of the saints will commence. The saints will rule the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26-27).

In the resurrection there will be no marriage (Mat. 22:30). The saints are to be raised as spiritual entities. Christ died for us so that when we wake from sleep we might live with him (1Thes. 5:10).

It is important that we understand that only the righteous pertain to the first resurrection. Righteousness (*zedek*) and Justice in Hebrew are the same word. They are understood to be the same thing. Thus, the unrepented perversion of justice precludes the elect from the first resurrection.

5.5 The Punishment of the Wicked

Mankind is subject to a system of righteous training. It is God's desire that no flesh should perish but that all should reach repentance (2Pet. 3:9).

If God took back His spirit then all flesh would perish together and man would return to dust (Job 34:15), thus the soul is non-existent.

The whole of mankind not raised at the first resurrection, which is a better resurrection (Heb. 11:35), will be raised from the dead at the second resurrection after the millennial reign of Messiah. This process is a period of judgment which appears to extend over one hundred years (Isa. 65:20). The resurrection of judgment (Jn. 5:29) is one of correction and teaching so that all mankind might be prepared to receive eternal life. The word for judgment (*kriseoos*) (rendered *damnation* in the KJV) has the meaning of *decision*.

The sense is that of correction stemming from opinions or decisions given concerning actions. It can carry the concept of punishment or of retribution. However, the general populace that has not had the opportunity of knowing God can hardly be punished for that fact. The wicked shall be subjected to intensive training. If they do not repent after

the period of one hundred years allowed from the second resurrection, they will be allowed to die and their bodies will be destroyed by Gehenna fire (translated *hell*) (Mat. 5:22,29,30, 10:28, 18:9, 23:15,33; Mk. 9:43,45,47; Lk. 12:5; Jas. 3:6).

There are three words in the New Testament which are translated as *hell*. These are SGD 86 *hades* which approximates SHD 7585 *Sheol*, or the pit or the grave, the place where dead bodies are placed. The two other texts are SGD 1067 *Gehenna*, which is of Hebrew origin for the Valley of Hinnom. This was a rubbish pit where refuse and dead animals from Jerusalem were burnt. Thus, Christ used it figuratively in referring to the disposal of the dead, both body and soul (Mat. 10:28), after judgment. The third is SGD 5020 *tartaros* which is the abyss where the angels were confined after the rebellion.

The eternal punishment (*kolasin*, a penal infliction) referred to in Matthew 25:46 is in opposition to eternal life. It is simply death. The sense of punishment such as in *timoria* in Hebrews 10:29, stems from the sense of vindication. 2Corinthians 2:6 uses the word *epitimia* from *esteem* as *citizenship*. Hence, punishment has this sense of removal of esteem as a citizen.

Thus, there is no place of eternal torment of the dead. The saints will be called to the first resurrection to do a job of teaching in the Millennium so that the demons might be judged against their performance and the world might have a comparative standard by which it might measure the results. These will not die, in the sense that they are judged now. They are referred to as *falling asleep*.

The rest of the world, not being part of the elect, is not being judged now. The rest of the world will be raised and corrected under supervision at the second resurrection (Rev. 20:12-13). There is no other resurrection or punishment other than the second or general resurrection. The repentant will be granted eternal life with the saints of the first resurrection and the unrepentant will simply die and their bodies will be burnt. After this, the state or condition of death and the grave, or Hades, will be done away with (Rev. 20:14). The wicked who are alive at the return of Messiah will be killed (Mal. 4:3) and consigned to the second resurrection.

The second resurrection was the punishment inflicted on Judah because of their rejection of Christ. They were the sons of the kingdom who were thrown into outer darkness (Mat. 8:12). They were consigned as a nation to the second resurrection instead of partaking of the divine nature (2Pet. 1:4) and the first resurrection. Apart from the allocation as a tribe within the elect (Rev. 7:5), Judah was not chosen to partake of the first resurrection. Many are called but few are chosen to undertake this task (Mat. 22:13-14). Many who espouse Christ, but mistreat his elect, or who are not diligent (Mat. 25:30) will in fact be consigned to the second resurrection (Mat. 24:51, 25:30) for there are many excluded (Lk. 13:26-28) and even those in the first resurrection are relocated in order of precedence (Lk. 13:30).

Chapter 6

The Church

6.1 Who or What is the Church?

Christ said that he would build his Church on the rock and the powers of death would not prevail against it (Mat. 16:18). God is the rock upon which the Church is built. The Church is a collection of individuals. It is not a building or corporate structure. The Church of God is the name by which individual Churches are called (1Cor. 1:2; 2Cor. 1:1 and also 1Cor. 11:22 in reference to the Church at Corinth). Collectively they are known generically both as the Church of God (Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13; 1Tim. 3:5) and the Churches of God (1Cor. 11:16; 1Thes. 2:14; 2Thes. 1:4). 1Corinthians 14:33 refers to the Churches of the saints, referring to the individuals of which they are composed. The Churches were multi-locational and each was responsible for its own affairs.

Individuals are called by God and given to Christ (Jn. 17:11-12; Heb. 2:13, 9:15). The Lord adds to the number of the Church day by day according to those being saved (Acts

2:47). The Churches were identified by location (Rom. 16:1; 1Cor. 1:2; 1Thes. 1:1; 2Thes. 1:1; 1Pet. 5:13) and were often small or house Churches (Rom. 16:5,23; 1Cor. 16:19; Col. 4:15; Phm. 1:2). Christ was made the head of all things for the Church (Eph. 1:22). God reveals to the heavenly powers, His wisdom through the Church (Eph. 3:10). Christ is the head of the Church, which is his body, and it is subject to Christ. Christ gave himself for the Church, as the head of each household is required to do for that unit (Eph. 5:23-26). The Church is required to be presented to Christ without spot or wrinkle being holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). The Church is nourished by Christ (Eph. 5:29). Christ, as head of the Church, was the firstborn from the dead so that he might have pre-eminence. Thus the Church, being the body of Christ, is married to Christ as a group at the first resurrection when the bridegroom comes (Mat. 25:1-10; Col. 1:18,24). The Church comprises the Church of the firstborn and their names are written in heaven (Heb. 12:23). The *House of God* is the *Church of the Living God*, the pillar and ground of the truth. Thus, the Church of God is founded on truth (1Tim. 3:15).

6.2 Church Organisation

The Church as an entity is responsible for the welfare of its people (1Tim. 5:16). This is on a local basis.

The Church is pastored by elders and deacons who are chosen by the brethren (Acts 1:22,26, 6:3,5-6, 15:22; 1Cor. 16:3; 2Cor. 8:19,23), and who pray and anoint the sick brethren in the name of the Lord (Jas. 5:14). The Holy Spirit makes them overseers of the flock which is the Church of God (Acts 20:28). The Churches have great autonomy (3Jn. 1:9-10). The administrative work of the Churches is to be undertaken by deacons and deaconesses (Rom. 16:1), who may be proved by this office (Phil. 1:1; 1Tim. 3:8-13). There are, in the Church, various functions including those of prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1), then miracles, healings, helps, governments and diversities of tongues (1Cor. 12:28). The teaching of the Church is by known languages, or tongues that are ordered and understood, being interpreted by those present (1Cor. 14:4-5).

The Churches are responsible for helping the work of the disciples or evangelists who are appointed to work over larger areas than that of individual Churches (Acts 14:23,27, 15:3,4,22, 18:22, 20:17; 1Cor. 4:17).

Christ gave specific messages to individual Churches and the angels in charge of each of them to serve as examples to the elect (Rev 2:1,8,12,18, 3:1,7,14).

The functions of judgment and determination of day-to-day affairs are to be made by the ordinary members of the Church, that they might be developed for their roles in judgment of the Host (1Cor. 6:4).

6.3 Aims and Objectives of the Church

The first objective of the Church is to continue the proclamation of the gospel of the Kingdom of God as it was commissioned to Jesus Christ (Mat. 4:17, 10:7, 11:1; Mk. 1:38-39; Mk. 3:14, 16:15; Lk. 4:43, 9:60).

The Church is to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, the opening of the prison to them that are bound (or bruised) (Isa. 61:1), and the recovery of sight to the blind (Lk. 4:18). It is to heal the sick (Lk. 9:2).

It is to preach the acceptable year of the Lord (Lk. 4:19) and to testify that it was Christ who was ordained of God to be the judge of the living and the dead (Acts 10:42).

The feeding of the Churches is the second objective of the elders (Acts 20:28) who endeavour to teach everywhere in every Church (1Cor. 4:17). The gifts of 1Corinthians 12:28 are utilised to assist the development of the Church. These spiritual gifts are to be developed with zeal to the development of the Church (1Cor. 14:12). The rulership of a person's own house is a guide to the effective rulership of the Church of God (1Tim. 3:5).

6.4 Sanctification

Those of the Church called by the Holy Spirit (Rom. 15:16) to be saints are sanctified (1Cor. 1:2) by God the Father and preserved in Jesus Christ (Jude 1).

The saints are sanctified by God through the blood of the covenant (Heb. 10:29) and the body of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:9-10). The saints are then saved in baptism (1Cor. 6:11). Thus the Holy Spirit is a spirit of our God, and through the name of Jesus Christ the elect are then sanctified and washed by his sacrifice continuing in the faith through God (Acts 26:18).

The elect are granted forgiveness through grace and maintain their position through faith thus sanctifying each other both in the Church and in families (1Cor. 7:14). Thus, the unbelieving spouse and the children are sanctified in the elect. The elect are sanctified into the body of Christ being one body in Christ (Rom. 12:5; 1Cor. 12:20-27) and, thus, sanctification is not dependent upon corporate structures.

Chapter 7

The Kingdom of God

7.1 The Establishment of the Kingdom

The establishment of the Kingdom of God was foretold as eliminating the governments of this world by the advent of Messiah at the end of the age (Dan. 2:44). The Kingdom of God was preached by Christ who said that it was then at hand (Mk. 1:14-15). Thus the Kingdom is in two phases; firstly, the spiritual Kingdom, and secondly the physical millennial Kingdom under Messiah.

7.1.1 The Spiritual Kingdom

Up until Pentecost 30 CE only a few of the prophets and leaders of Israel were given the Holy Spirit and for specific purpose. No other nation, up until the admission of the Gentiles to the Church from 30 CE, had the Holy Spirit. Thus all are confined to the second or general resurrection in Revelation 20:4ff.

The Holy Spirit was given to mankind, from the death of Christ, as the first phase of the Kingdom from Pentecost 30 CE (Acts 2:1-4) which they saw come with power (Mk. 9:1). It is to be received in humility and in a zeal for knowledge as a child (Mk. 10:15). Unless a person is born again, through water and the Spirit, they cannot see the Kingdom of God (Jn. 3:3-5).

The mysteries of the Kingdom of God were confined to the elect and understanding is given by the Holy Spirit, thus the Bible is written in parables (Lk. 8:10). The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 14:17). It is not in word, but in power (1Cor. 4:20).

Repentance is an absolute prerequisite to admission to the Kingdom. Repentant sinners will be admitted before the self-righteous (Mat. 21:31-32). The calling of the elect is by the general scattering of information likened unto seed (Mat. 13:3-9). It is scattered and is received with great zeal through the Spirit (Mat. 13:44-46). Hence, many are called but few are actually chosen (Mat. 20:16, 22:14). The calling gathers others, as well as those of the elect, who are sifted at the end of the age, either at the coming of Messiah or, for those who are dead, at the resurrections (Mat. 13:25-30, 36, 38-40, 47-50). The elect are predestined to be called and hence justified and glorified (Rom. 8:29).

When the Kingdom is given through the Holy Spirit, it is like a mustard seed which grows into a mighty tree, or like leaven which leavens the whole being (Mat. 13:31-32), thus enabling God to become all in all (1Cor. 15:28) (see Marshall's *Interlinear* (Eph. 4:6)).

The prerequisite is to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things will be added unto you (Mat. 6:33). The power over the demons is a sign of the Kingdom of God in the individual (Mat. 12:28). The execution of the will of God is the essential prerequisite to retention of the Kingdom through the Holy Spirit. If it is not utilised properly it is taken and given to others showing the fruits of it (Mat. 21:31,43).

The Kingdom comes not by observation, but is within the individual (Lk. 17:20-21). The Kingdom of God, also termed the Kingdom of Heaven, is gained not by the profession of Christ as Lord, which is one aspect of the elect, but by the execution of the will of God the Father (Mat. 7:21). Through the humble execution of the will of God one becomes great in the Kingdom of God (Mat. 18:3-4).

Those precluded from partaking of the Kingdom are specifically mentioned in 1Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:21 and Ephesians 5:5.

7.1.2 The Millennial Reign of Christ

The millennial reign of the Messiah is specifically mentioned in Revelation 20:2-7. The thousand year period is referred to as a Millennium or Chiliad.

7.1.2.1 The Return of the Messiah

The restoration of the biblical system through the advent of Messiah is found in Zechariah 14:4. Christ said by parable that he had to go away and then return (Lk. 19:12).

The Messiah will come to the Mount of Olives. With his elect he will establish his government. He will rebuild the Temple (Acts 15:16). He will reintroduce the biblical system including the Sabbath, New Moons and annual Holy Day periods. All nations will be required to send their emissaries to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles or they will receive no rain in due season (Zech. 14:16-19).

The coming will be with great signs and wonders, in power and great glory (Mat. 24:27,30; Rev 1:7). His return will be obvious and accompanied by heavenly signs (Rev. 6:12). The powers will be shaken. The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light (Mat. 24:29; Acts 2:20). He will be seated on the right hand of power and will come on the clouds of heaven. God thus gives Christ power (Mat. 26:64; Mk. 14:62; Lk. 21:27; Acts 1:11).

Christ will come with the shout of the archangel Michael and at the last trumpet blast (1Thes. 4:16-17; Rev. 11:15).

When the son of Man comes in all his glory, to be glorified in his saints (2Thes 1:10), with his angels, he will separate people and deal with them (Mat. 25:31-46).

The elect, those of the Kingdom of God, given the Holy Spirit through repentance and adult baptism, keeping the commandments, will be resurrected at Christ's coming. This is the first resurrection. The rest of the dead will not live until the end of the Millennium. This is the second resurrection (Rev. 20:4 ff). The elect are the hope and reason for the coming of the Messiah (1Thes. 2:19; Rev. 22:20). The elect are to be established blameless in holiness ready for the coming of Christ and the Host (1Thes. 3:13; 1Thes. 5:23). The love of the truth is essential to be saved (2Thes. 2:10). The Lord will slay the wicked one at his return with the breath of his mouth (2Thes. 2:8). The Church is admonished to stay awake and not sleep because it does not know the hour the Lord comes (Mk. 13:35-37; Rev. 3:3,11). Christ returns in righteous judgment and makes war with all those who refuse to keep God's commandments (Ps. 96:13; Rev. 19:11). Christ will return and deal with mankind for all their activities (Rev. 22:12).

7.1.2.2 The Gathering of Israel

On the return of the Messiah the elect and the survivors of physical Israel, some of whom will be used as priests, will be gathered to Jerusalem from the four corners of the earth (Isa. 11:12, 66:19-21).

7.1.2.3 The Day of the Lord

Before the *Day of the Lord*, there will be a rebellion or apostasy, a falling away (from *apostasias*) from the truth and the law among the elect. The man of lawlessness (*anomias*), so named for the falling away from the laws of God through his teaching among the elect, is revealed (2Thes. 2:3-8). He sits in the Temple of God and is called God. He will be killed by Messiah at his coming.

The Lord will destroy those who war against Jerusalem. People, being destroyed, will panic, turning against their fellows (Zech. 14:12-13). This will happen unexpectedly (1Thess. 5:2).

The devastation will traumatise the earth. Mankind will hide in the mountains and rocks because Christ has come in wrath and no one will be able to stand (Rev. 6:15-17), given the trumpets and plagues God will pour out in the last days (Rev. 8:7-9:21; Rev. 16:1-20). The end of the Day of the Lord, which extends through the Millennium, will see the end of the earth as we know it. The planet will be destroyed by fire (2Pet. 3:7-10,12), thus removing all trace of human habitation.

The entire process of the Day of the Lord is geared to judge the earth and correct humanity (Jude 14-16). Those of the elect who sin are given back into the world system so that they can be saved in the Day of the Lord, by being corrected in the second resurrection (1Cor. 5:5). Thus there are only two resurrections.

7.1.3 The Eternal Kingdom of God

7.1.3.1 The Coming of God

When Christ has subjugated every rule and authority, he will hand back to God the entire system (1Cor. 15:24,28). Then God will come to the earth and transfer the administration of the heavens here. The whole earth is then full of His glory (Isa. 6:3) and God and the Lamb are the lights of the system (Rev. 21:23).

7.1.3.2 The New Earth and the New Jerusalem

Isaiah 65:17 states that there shall be new heavens and a new earth created. The seed of Israel will remain before God within this new system (Isa. 66:22) until the end of the Millennium when all flesh shall be obsolete. God will dwell in Zion and it will be called the faithful city (Zech. 8:3). The city of New Jerusalem will come out of heaven (Rev. 3:12). This New Jerusalem is the Holy City which comes down on the creation of the new heaven and the new earth (Rev. 21:1-4,7,10). Then God will be with all men. The former things will no longer be remembered (Isa. 65:17). We await the new heaven and the new earth, in which righteousness dwells, according to the promise (2Pet. 3:13). Many of the elect who overcome will be made pillars in the new Temple of God (Rev. 3:12). Thus it is a spiritual edifice.

7.1.3.3 The Destiny of Mankind

The elect will be given administration of the planet for the Millennium (Lk. 19:17,19), being like angels (Mat. 22:30), inheriting the earth and ultimately seeing God, being Sons of God (Mat. 5:3-11). This position is extended to all nations (Mat. 8:11). This is the pleasure of God the Father (Lk. 12:32). For all who are led by the Spirit of God are Sons of God (Rom. 8:14).

The millennial Kingdom of Messiah is merely the teaching vehicle to prepare mankind for their final responsibilities, thus fulfilling their potential and the plan of God which was laid out before the foundation of the earth.

The ultimate destiny of mankind is to be prepared to take their place in the new integrated system of the Host and to take up their rightful inheritance which is the development and rulership of the earth (Ps. 8:1-9; Dan. 2:44-45) and the newly ordered universe (Dan. 7:27, 12:3).